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Ensign appeared to understand the pension problem and said that he would check with various folks in his district to see whether he should support the provision. He said he was inclined to help us out because there is no "cost" to the provision. I have asked the Las Vegas Indian tribe to write a letter of support to Ensign.

Ensign was very interested in Indian gaming matters, and asked whether the Oneida would support an amendment to IGRA that would place a moratorium on any new Indian gaming. He said that such a bill would insulate tribes like the Oneida from future competition and we should support the measure. We gave him very little feedback to this idea.

I think Ensign has his eyes set on the United States Senate and I would expect him to run against Harry Reid in 1998.

Tom Collier, Chief of Staff to Secretary Babbitt

Mr. Collier will be leaving the Department of the Interior at the end of June. He has been meeting with a number of tribes recently and says that he is putting a report to the Secretary together concerning the future of Indian gaming. I expect that he will be joining his old law firm of Steptow and Johnson in Washington, D. C. and his recent desire to meet with Indian tribes is his unique way of looking for future clients.

With respect to Hudson, Collier said the Department of Interior will not sign off on the Hudson proposal as long as Governor Thompson and the area community is opposed to the deal. He currently views both parties to be opposed to the deal.

Collier is of the opinion that Indians should support a narrow form of means testing as a trade-off for a strong Indian gaming bill. He thinks such a move will pacify the Republicans who think all tribes are rich. He thinks only two tribes would actually be impacted by means testing.